

February 5, 2019

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. The following were in attendance: Commissioners Greg Amundson, Jan Hogle, Perry Rynders, Travis Loeffler and Chair Dan Squyres. Staff present: City Planner Merritt Clapp-Smith, City Administrator Neil Soltis, and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. City Council liaison Jerry Cusick was also present.

Chair Squyres called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES

Rynders, seconded by Amundson, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Hogle recommended 2 amendments to the January 8, 2019 minutes. Under discussion on an amendment to the development code for community solar, Hogle asked for clarification of her comments. In paragraph 3:

- Solar is defined as an ag commodity at the ~~state~~-federal level.

In paragraph 8,

- It is unconstitutional to require ag production to be licensed.

Loeffler, seconded by Rynders, moved to approve the January 8, 2019 meeting minutes as amended. The motion carried 5-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Hogle, seconded by Loeffler, moved to nominate Squyres to serve as Chair of the Planning Commission for a one-year term. The motion carried 5-0.

Rynders, seconded by Squyres, moved to nominate Loeffler as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission for a one-year term. The motion carried 5-0.

The above recommendations for Chair and Vice Chair will be acted on by the City Council at their February 19, 2019 meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE REGULATING FENCES IN SHORELAND AND ST. CROIX RIVER DISTRICTS

Administrator Soltis explained the ordinance amendment to the development code, Chapter 2, Section 3.5(2), Fences. When the Shoreland Ordinance was approved last year, it did not contain the regulations on fences that were in the previous ordinance. Therefore, regulation of fences in the shoreland is governed by the language in the development code which does not have restrictions on building a fence up to the ordinary high-water level.

The proposed ordinance would add the language from the previous shoreland regulations to the development code to restrict fences from being constructed closer to the lake or river than the lake/river side of the home. This language would be applicable to both lake and river properties.

Chair Squyres opened the public hearing at 7:14 p.m. There were no comments and the hearing was closed.

Rynders, seconded by Amundson, moved to recommend approval of the ordinance amending Chapter 2, Section 3.5(2), Fences as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

DISCUSSION ON AMENDMENT TO DEVELOPMENT CODE FOR COMMUNITY SOLAR

Planner Clapp-Smith summarized the comments received at the January 31st public information meeting on the future of community solar in the City. The meeting included a short presentation on the history of and current community solar regulations on the state and local levels. After the presentation, there was an opportunity at various topic tables to discuss people's concerns and to gather their comments on a potential new community solar ordinance. Approximately 30 people were in attendance. Chair Squyres said this was a beneficial meeting to give people an opportunity to weigh in before the Commission begins to draft an ordinance.

Key topics which will be addressed in a draft ordinance include:

- Vegetative screening and fencing – keep as natural as possible; animal friendly fencing
- Interconnection poles – limit to one pole; remove poles if technology allows
- Geographic limitations – describe a district within x feet of feeder line
- Height – limit to 10'-12'
- Limit size of solar installations by x acres

Planner Clapp-Smith will prepare a draft ordinance for further discussion at the March 5th meeting.

DISCUSSION ON THE DEFINITION AND REGULATION OF ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

The Commissioners continued to discuss the ordinance on accessory structures, and how to manage the excess number of small buildings that a property may have as animal shelters. Planner Clapp-Smith offered code examples from other communities that provide some flexibility for small structures. Staff was directed to prepare an ordinance amendment with options for further discussion next month.

DISCUSSION ON SOLSMART REVIEW OF ORDINANCE REGULATING ACCESSORY SOLAR

Administrator Soltis explained the handout from SolSmart that summarized the outcome of a zoning review of the City's ordinance on accessory solar to assess possible barriers related to solar development, such as setbacks, height and screening. The Commissioners were tasked with reviewing the handout and to consider if they should make any changes to the ordinance for discussion at a future meeting.

**DISCUSSION ON ZONING DISTRICT UPDATES FOR THE UPDATED
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Administrator Soltis reported that the Met Council has provided their comments on the City's updated 2040 Comprehensive Plan, with few substantive changes. The next step in the process is the implementation phase -- to amend the zoning regulations to be consistent with the Comp Plan. The Commissioners were asked to consider the newly designated Rural Center to provide for greater density and growth within the core of the city, and how they envision this to look like for discussion at future meetings.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

A minor subdivision, variance request and a potential concept development will be on upcoming agendas.

ADJOURNMENT

Loeffler, seconded by Hogle, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund
Deputy Clerk